AN

# ADDRESS

TO THE

# ELECTORS

OF

# SOUTHWARK,

ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

1. Their late Petition to Parliament.
2. The Conduct of their Repreſentatives on that occaſion.
3. The State of the Britiſh Nation.
4. Their Duty under the preſent Circumſtances.

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BY AN ELECTOR.

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AN

# *ADDRESS TO THE ELECTORS*

OF

# SOUTHWARK, &c.

CITIZENS,

THE importance of the times is perhaps a ſufficient juſtification for any one offering his ſentiments, but notwithſtanding that, I think myſelf bound to ſtate the reaſons for taking the liberty of addreſſing you on the preſent occaſion.

At the commencement of the preſent year, when the war took ſuch an unfavourable turn as to leave us no rational hope of ſucceſs or victory, and the people were every where expreſſing their wiſhes for peace; I was extremely anxious to know what anſwer parliament would return to their ſeveral petitions.

When your's was preſented, it appeared to me to contain arguments ſo cogent againſt the continuance of the war, and in favour of opening a negociation for peace, that I thought your repreſentatives could certainly not ſuffer it to be paſſed over without requiring an anſwer to the ſpecial points it contained, if they ever intended to ſolicit your ſuffrages again: for you certainly had a right to expect *their* reſpect and attention to your petitions, and the non-performance of their duty would have left them without any future claim to your confidence. With concern therefore, it is that I ſee the almoſt certainty of another campaign, without your petition having undergone

any more conſideration than if you had no repreſentatives in parliament. This is a grievance which moſt certainly ought to have called forth the ableſt pens to delineate, but which ought not to be paſſed over unnoticed, though undertaken by the moſt illiterate; ſo groſs an inſult I thought could not have been put on the Southwark Electors, without calling forth ſome of their champions to have fully apprized them of the pernicious conſequence that muſt inevitably reſult from a conſtituent body being thus neglected.

As four months have now nearly elapſed ſince the petition was preſented, and none have done more than declare their injury in private; I venture to offer you my opinion on what line of conduct you ought to purſue, to prevent yourſelves being degraded and neglected in future, which I will endeavour to do by pointing out the means that have been uſed to juſtify it in this inſtance.

The friends of the preſent war, conſcious of not having truth or juſtice on their ſide, have very judiciouſly avoided taking argument for their weapon, the ſame ſubtility that teaches them this, ſhews them another weapon, which they may uſe with equal, if not greater probability of ſucceſs; namely, "calumny and falſehood," they have ſeen how effectually it has been uſed for the purpoſe of deluding the people, eſpecially when an unuſual degree of ignorance was required (as in the juſtification of the preſent war) they alſo find it neceſſary to keep up the deluſion, by the ſame means.

The French people are repreſented as a nation of Atheiſts, Aſſaſſins, and ſcarce a ſentence is uttered, but contains ſuch torrents of abuſe, that one is led to doubt whether the people deſcribed, or the people deſcribing, are the greateſt friends; every falſehood is fabricated that can excite prejudice againſt them, every invective poured out that can keep animoſity alive, and the French muſt even be exterminated, to prove that the war miniſtry have engaged in, "*is juſt and neceſſary*," but when the time ſeems to be arrived, that this part of the veil is to be rent in twain, and the minds of Britons enlightened leſt they ſhould be convinced that the war may be terminated, the Sheldt navigated, France acknowledged a Republic, and

Britons

Britons yet be happy; the friends of peace in their turn muſt be calumniated as a banditti of robbers, whoſe perſons and property were not worth protecting, and whoſe want of reſpectability diſſolves every obligation to treat them civilly.

It perhaps is unneceſſary to advert to ſpeeches on the London, Carliſle, Durham, and Mancheſter petitions; the remarks made by a certain *Time*, ſerving print on your General Meeting, on the 5th of February, will ſerve to ſhew with what effrontery thoſe arts are uſed. When you heard that the London petition was contrary to the ſenſe of the Livery, that the Carliſle did not ſpeak the ſenſe of the Freemen, (being abſent from the meeting) you perhaps had no evidence to the contrary, and your partiality for human nature excited your belief, thinking it impoſſible that men ſhould be ſhameleſs enough to aſſert what public teſtimony could prove to be falſe, and as you over rated their modeſty, you credited their ſtory; but at your own meeting, ye were your own witneſſes, you ſaw it numerous and reſpectable; you heard ſome of the moſt valuable of your Fellow Citizens addreſs themſelves to your judgment in favour of peace, and you know your own readineſs to have heard any arguments on the contrary ſide; you ſaw the buſineſs conducted in a fair, open, and orderly manner; that perſons got into the hall who had no right, cannot be doubted: ſeeing the high bailiff took no pains to prevent them; but that every elector might have found as eaſy an acceſs is equally certain, conſequently your own evidence qualifies you to judge what degree of credit is to be given to *gentlemen* on the other ſide of the queſtion, when you read the following extract from the Times of the ſixth of February.

## BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK MEETING.

"The electors were called upon by the bailiff, at the requiſition of a few individuals, to meet at the New Town Hall yeſterday at twelve o'clock, to give their ſentiments, "Whether or not it was proper, at this time, to make an application to parliament, for the purpoſe of obtaining a peace with France?"—At about half paſt twelve, St. Margaret's Hill began

began to be crouded with a deſcription of people well known at the Chalk Farm meeting.

"The door of the Hall not being opened at one o'clock, ſeveral of the mob, to whom breaking into houſes was not an uncuſtomary practice, found their way into the hall through a window, and opened the door. The puſh was great who ſhould be firſt, and in about five minutes the little room above ſtairs, not ſufficient to contain one-tenth of any, even the ſmalleſt of the pariſhes, was filled by perſons, one in fifty of whom were not Electors.

"A chair and a table being with difficulty procured, and the ſcaffolding boards and rubbiſh removed to one ſide."

"Mr. *Townſhend*, the deputy bailiff, informed the meeting, that Sir Watkin Lewes being confined by a ſevere fit of illneſs, was not able to give his perſonal attendance.

"Their High Mightineſſes the mob, on this voted Mr. Townſhend in the chair, with a ſhout of joy; and

"Citizen *Boſtock*, the cheeſmonger, came forward and made a ſpeech about miniſters, the conſtitution, war, liberty, and peace, accompanied with ſhouting, hiſſing, clapping, and other uſual murmuring muſic to be always heard at thoſe kind of meetings. When he had finiſhed, what he, no doubt, thought a grand piece of oratory, he propoſed an addreſs to the Houſe of Commons, deſiring a peace with France.

"Citizen *Shipley*, the perſon mentioned in our paper of yeſterday, ſeconded the addreſs, and alſo delivered a ſpeech, the particulars of which could not be collected on account of the noiſe and uproar of the mob, ſome of whom were for adjourning into the open air, and others for having the buſineſs concluded in the *little* room.

"At length it was agreed, with a loud huzza, that the petition ſhould be preſented by the members of the Borough. An exception was made to Alderman *Le Meſurier*; but on ſome of the Chalk Farm part of the company ſaying that he ſhould be commanded not only to preſent it, but to ſupport it againſt his inclination, he and Mr. *Thornton* were, by a reſolution, ordered to take it to the Houſe of Commons.

It

" It was now propoſed to vote the thanks of this meeting to Sir *Watkin Lewes;* but that was overruled, becauſe he did not attend his duty on account of illneſs,

" Several curious ſpeeches followed, but what the ſubject was, no perſon could hear. The meeting then broke up, and the mobility diſperſed.

" There were not above two or three reputable inhabitants preſent; thoſe that did attempt to get in being puſhed back by the mob.

" In all probability a counter-petition will be ſigned in oppoſition to the preſent one."

Citizens, theſe are the means uſed to render abortive your conſtitutional endeavours to procure peace; I ſay conſtitutional, for you did not endeavour to obtain your end by miſleading the people; you did not tell them the chief magiſtrate was bent upon war, and would deſpiſe their petitions; that the ſelfiſhneſs of parliament kept it careleſs about the people, and that its obſtinacy would keep it deaf to their complaints; you did not tell them that government fattened on war, while the people were ruined by it; and that the only way to ſave themſelves from deſtruction, was to take from their governers, the power of effecting it. No, you had recourſe to the conſtitutional method of preſenting a petition, (not ſmuggled in ſecret, or hawked about among a party) it was obtained in a conſtitutional way, at a meeting called by the conſtitutional officer, where every elector had an opportunity of giving it a conſtitutional oppoſition; but the want of which ſanctioned the petition, by the only authority the conſtitution can acknowledge. A MAJORITY OF THE ELECTORS IN COMMON HALL ASSEMBLED. Now, mark the courſe taken by theſe enemies to peace, theſe *gentlemen* who are perpetually ſaying they *revere* the conſtitution; obſerve their conduct, they pretended that it was neceſſary to plunge the country into bloodſhed and want, in order to prevent one jot or tittle of the conſtitution being altered; an inquiſition was eſtabliſhed to ſecure it from reform, and ſome citizens, who were ſuſpected of wiſhing to amend it, were piouſly dragged to the ſlaughter-houſe, for the purpoſe of devoutly offering them up-

on the altar of its perfection. Theſe *felons* have been acquitted for the want of criminality, and their treaſon, diſperſed for the want of exiſtence; but let us ſee whether theſe *conſtitutional devotees* are equally innocent, whether they have practically adhered to the ſpirit of the conſtitution, for it ſignifies nothing, that men laviſh praiſes on it if they act not in conformity to it, and to aſcertain this point, it is only neceſſary to enquire whether their objection to your petition was made at the conſtitutional meeting, called by the High Bailiff; if it was not, they have given no evidence that they love any thing more in the conſtitution than its corruptions, and it certainly was not, for they knew that to have oppoſed it, there, would have expoſed their weakneſs, and would have diſcovered that truth, which would have ruined their cauſe: In the very act therefore, of expreſſing their attachment to the conſtitution, they reſort to the unconſtitutional ſubterfuge of counteracting its operation, by getting a minority in ſecret, to do what a majority in public would not, the ſenſe of a ſmall party being gained (though in this ſurreptitious way) afforded your repreſentatives a ſufficient pretence to remain ſilent; the concluſion is obvious, they have proved in this inſtance, that, notwithſtanding all their fair pretences, they are like Judas, ready to betray the object of their adulation into the hands of thoſe, who are ready to crucify, and lay it in a ſepulchre; but let them remember, if ever it ſhould riſe again, it will be with threefold energy.

Citizens, is it not enough, that a very ſmall minority of the people are allowed to chooſe Members of Parliament, but ſhall a ſmall part of that minority be ſuffered to uſurp their rights, controul their power, and impoſe laws upon the whole nation, againſt its will; laws which are calculated to accompliſh its miſery and their ambitious views, it is now time that every individual began to appropriate ſome portion of his attention to the ſituation of his country, with a determined reſolution after finding out the cauſe of its diſtreſs, never to relax his efforts, till the joint exertions of the nation, ſhall obtain a reform and put a period to its calamities; that the country is at preſent in ſuch a lamentable ſituation, that nothing ſhort of a ſpeedy reform can ſave it from the ſtate in

which

which France was at the latter end of the year 1792, will not be denied by any perſon who is acquainted with the temper of the lower orders of the people, and the indignation they have diſcovered towards the preſent miniſtry, to whoſe extravagance and improvidence they attribute the diſtreſſes, they have experienced during the ſevere winter: How difficult was it for ſeveral weeks to paſs through any poor neighbourhood without hearing perſons relating their wants, and concluding by expreſſing a wiſh, that a number would join them to go and ſhoot Mr. P—The deſign being ſo frequently repeated, at laſt occaſioned a report, that it actually had been attempted, and though that was not the caſe, it was perhaps not owing to a want of will, but of opportunity; for when the report was known to be falſe, it occaſioned a lamentation as univerſal as the contradiction of the ſtory. This circumſtance alone is ſufficient to ſhew that the people know who are their enemies, and only wait for opportunity to obtain redreſs, an opportunity, which perhaps none can tell how ſoon ſome trifling circumſtances may offer, and the uncertainty of which event places the country on ſuch a dangerous precipice, that no man can ſay he performs his duty who does not endeavour to obtain a redreſs of grievances, "by rational and peaceable means."

I believe, laying aſide all party diſſentions, all political antipathies, and all aſperity of expreſſion, there are two things in which all thinking men are agreed. The firſt is, that a reform is neceſſary; the ſecond is, that no good reform can be obtained by riots and mobs; there is a third, upon which all may in ſome meaſure agree that is, that under the ſtimulus of national calamity, reform may be attempted by inſurrection; but there is a fourth, upon which I know we ſhall not agree; namely, that if an inſurrection ſhould break out, it will be eaſily quelled. They muſt be ſhortſighted politicians who have not learned that no men poſſeſs ſuch an unconquerable ſpirit, as thoſe who are awakened by a ſenſe of their wrongs, and he muſt be very imperfectly acquainted with the politics of this country, who has not ſeen its inhabitants reconciling themſelves to bear every kind of inſult till they have ſtrengthened

ened themſelves by the united efforts of a majority of their countrymen, ſo as to be ready to hurl down the thunder of popular vengeance upon the heads of their oppreſſors, as ſoon as they ſhall looſe their hope of obtaining redreſs in a better way; in what a precarious ſtate then, is the little happineſs which we yet poſſeſs, if while the country is hanging over the very brink of ruin, it only waits for ſome opportune occurrence to plunge it into the unfathomable gulph of civil war, and the only probable means of preventing this horrible cataſtrophe, is by every individual exerting his efforts to obtain reform. How then will that man be able to anſwer his conſcience? and how will his name be execrated by poſterity, to whom it may be ſaid, thy indolence was the means of haſtening thy country's ruin? The abſurdity of any man riſking the fate of his children for the ſake of a little perſonal eaſe, would be ſo nearly aſſimilating him to thoſe who offered up their ſeed to Moloch, that I am perſuaded there could not be a man found in Britain baſe enough to continue ſo criminally inactive, if he was perſuaded the danger really exiſted; taking it for granted, then that all men are agreed as to the neceſſity of reform, the improbability of any good one being obtained by inſurrection, and the poſſibility of its being attempted that way; the only point upon which there can be a difference of ſentiment, is that if an inſurrection ſhould be raiſed, it may be eaſily quelled, and here I feel it my duty to ſtate the reaſon why I differ from thoſe who think it will; for perhaps to this may that dangerous apathy be aſcribed, which prevails through ſome part of the community, and our greateſt danger lies in that apathy. Perhaps it may be opening too wide a field for controverſy to ſay becauſe inſurrections which have been founded, in juſtice, conducted with wiſdom, and maintained with zeal, have in the general been ſucceſsful; and yet if we take a retroſpect of the Roman, Grecian, and as far as it relates to the reigns of John, Charles, or James; even the Britiſh hiſtories we ſhall find it a fact. I ſhall therefore ſtate as my firſt reaſon, becauſe the fortitude with which the people have born all their ſufferings without permitting themſelves to be betrayed into any indiſcret attempt, to looſe their burthen

then at an improper time, will alſo enable them to encounter all thoſe checks and misfortunes, which generally meet thoſe who have engaged in any dangerous enterprize, with an intrepedity which if it does not render them invincible, will at leaſt, call forth ſuch a degree of exertion on the part of their opponents, that in all probability, the nation will be almoſt deſolated before victory can be decided: to prove that the people of Britain poſſeſs this fortitude; it is only neceſſary to point out ſome of the ſufferings which they have already endured, and the inſults they have already born, which I will by no means exaggerate, as I believe if the nation were to ſee them in the detail, it would loſe all that calmneſs and ſteadineſs of temper, which is ſo neceſſary under the preſent circumſtances; I ſhall therefore confine myſelf to the ſingle point of ſhewing the diſparity between the income of moſt of our working men, and the prices of thoſe neceſſaries, which are requiſite to keep the body in life and health. Though it is difficult to fix the income of any ſet of men exactly, owing to the various occupations in which they are employed, and the different abilities of men in the ſame occupation; yet we may judge how far they may be able to ſatisfy nature, by dividing the whole of the working men into two claſſes, allowing one third to have 1l. 1s. per week, and the other two thirds 14s. I am aware that many of our mechanics and manufacturers receive more than a guinea per week, when they work, but reckoning the time which they are out of employ in the courſe of the year: I believe it often happens that they have earned little more than 50l. at the year's end. I alſo know that many whom I have rated below 1l. 1s. advance pretty far towards that ſum, but thoſe alſo being ſubject to much loſs of time, ſeldom get more than 14s. upon an average; and as it is impoſſible for any family to live upon leſs without being expoſed to many excruciating torments, I will preſume that in this *humane country*, there is no perſon callous enough to offer a ſervant leſs. The next thing to be conſidered, is the prices of the different neceſſaries of life, by which I would be underſtood meat, drink, and lodging; for without a portion of each of theſe no individual can exiſt.

Indeed cuſtom has almoſt made cloathing a neceſſary of life in this country, but as the inhabitants of other countries, as alſo of this in former times have been able to do without, our grandees, may think it proper that we ſhould try the experiment. Furniture, education and books, are among the indulgences which our forefathers uſed to allow themſelves; but which it is evident a vaſt number of inhabitants of this *civilized happy country muſt learn to diſpenſe with.* If therefore we muſt endeavour to reconcile ourſelves to the ſtate of Barbarians and Savages; if with a ſtoical fortitude we are determined to content ourſelves without any of the conveniences or ſuperfluities of life; let us ſee how far the preceding incomes are competent to procure its neceſſaries; the quantity of food required for each family, muſt be proportioned to their number and as their numbers neceſſarily muſt vary, I ſhall calculate upon that of which there is the greateſt proportion; therefore ſuppoſe a family to conſiſt of a man, his wife, and two children, they will conſume a quartern loaf per day, which coſts 9d. one pound and a half of meat for their dinners, will alſo coſt 9d. atleaſt, they cannot do without a pint of porter at their dinner and ſupper, this will coſt $3\frac{1}{2}$d. then allowing 2d. per day for tea, 1d. for ſugar, an $\frac{1}{2}$d. for milk, it will be found that their ſtipend of 2s. per day, is inſufficient, notwithſtanding they neither eat butter, cheeſe or vegetables.

| | | | | | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bread | — | — | — | — | 0 | 9 |
| Meat | — | — | — | — | 0 | 9 |
| Porter | — | — | — | — | 0 | $3\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Tea | — | — | — | — | 0 | 2 |
| Sugar | — | — | — | — | 0 | 1 |
| Milk | — | — | — | — | 0 | $0\frac{1}{2}$ |
| | | | | | 2 | 1 |

I am aware that a certain deſcription of readers will exclaim againſt this calculation, and ſay that the poor ſhould not be allowed to eat meat; but that hard dumplings, potatoes, &c. are good enough. To ſuch adviſers I can only ſay, that if they

they were as ready to try the experiment as to give the advice, they would ſoon be convinced of the neceſſity of *peace and plenty*.

The poor already know too much of hard dumplings, potatoes and ſalt boiled flower and milk, with a variety of ſuch things, to think them much cheaper, than the preceeding ſtatement, for labour requires ſomething ſubſtantial for ſupport, and they know by the pains in their ſtomach, the dizzineſs of their heads and the langour of their bodies; that without ſomething of this kind, they could not retain ſtrength enough to continue their labours, while therefore the hardened and inſenſible *Ariſtocrat* will think I have dealt too generouſly by the *Swiniſh Multitude*; the humane and conſiderate will confeſs that I have not allowed any thing more than what is abſolutely neceſſary. As a farther juſtification of my ſtatement, I will add one remark, which is that ſcanty rooms, in large cities, are always filled with bad air, the putrid tendency of which is greatly corrected by a good quality of food, where it is accompanied by poor and ſcanty diet, epidemical diſeaſes are the certain conſequences. This ought to awaken even the ſelfiſhneſs of Ariſtocracy, for diſeaſes of that kind ſeldom confine themſelves to the perſons with whom they orginate.

So that it will appear they can neither pay for firing, candle or lodging, and yet we all know that thoſe things muſt be had ſomewhere, how then are they to be obtained? only upon credit, but as they have no means of making payment, the people are conſtantly loaded with a heavy debt, conſequently hunted about from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, they can at laſt find no refuge but within the peſtilential, deſpotic, emaciating walls of a priſon, and all this for no other crime than having the misfortune to be born in a country, were the nobility and gentry waſte in extravagance and luxury, ſuch quantities of the neceſſaries of life that the people who labour to procure them cannot come in for a ſhare.

Having pointed out the degree of happineſs enjoyed by thoſe who earn 14s. we now come to conſider the ſtate of thoſe who earn 1l. 1s. theſe are in general compoſed of that deſcription of perſons, who from having been decently brought

up

up receive ſome little education, and apprenticed to a decent trade; are taught to believe themſelves ſomething ſuperior to the lower claſſes of people, theſe have been uſed to ſee their fathers eat vegetables with their meat and butter with their bread, we muſt therefore expect them to indulge themſelves in what may be called the conveniences of life, which can by no means come within the reach of the former claſs. They will therefore conſume the ſame kind of articles which have been allotted to the other amounting to 14s. 7d per week and in addition to thoſe articles we muſt ſuppoſe them to uſe a buſhel and-a-half of coals which will coſt 2s. their lodging will coſt them 3s. unleſs they eat, ſleep, work and cook all in one room; they will uſe one pound of candles, which coſt 9d. and the remaining 8d. muſt ſerve for butter, cheeſe and vegetables the whole week; but cloathing cannot be purchaſed even with this ſalary.

| | *l.* | *s.* | *d.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bread, Meat, Beer, Tea, Sugar and Milk | | 14 | 7 |
| Coals — — — — | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Lodging — — — | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Candles — — — | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| Reſidue for Butter, Cheeſe, Vegetables | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| | £.1 | 1 | 0 |

From this calculation it appears that even a guinea per week, is ſcarce ſufficient to ſupply a family with neceſſaries, without leaving the ſmalleſt ſurplus to be applied for purchaſing conveniences; but here perhaps it may not be improper to anticipate a ſuggeſtion of ſome œconomical readers, who will ſay the woman might work as well as the huſband, and by that means augment their income. To ſuch an opinion I can only reply that it muſt have been formed for the want of knowing thoſe accidents and diſorders, that reign in familes, where the time of the miſtreſs is not devoted to its management.

The accidents which young children often meet with is not the only evil which this ill judged œconomy occaſions, for it ſometimes happens that every domeſtic duty muſt neceſ-

ſarily be neglected, and when the father of the family returning home at night, fatigued with labour ſeeks to enjoy the comforts of a fire ſide with his little ones about him, he finds his wife has not had time to kindle it, and if he wants but a little watergruel warmed, muſt prepare it himſelf; theſe and a variety of other ſimilar diſappointments, weaken his attachment for home, and lead him from want of attachment to abſolute averſion, inſomuch that the man and his wife being deprived of ſocial enjoyment, get ſoured in their tempers and inſtead of being a mutual comfort to each other, become a double curſe

Indeed it requires very little attention to obſerve, that to manage a family in which there are two children, ought to be accounted work enough for one woman, without her being obliged to interfere in any other laborious concern, and ſurely there can be no œconomy in aſſigning to this amiable part of the creation, ſo great a portion of labour as would prevent them from exerting thoſe domeſtic accompliſhments which are peculiar to their ſex and eſſentially neceſſary to the happineſs of the human race.

Admitting then that women ſhould have no more labour aſſigned than what conſiſts in the well management of their family, it follows that the greater part of our working people are reduced to ſuch a ſtate of wretchedneſs, that they can neither enjoy the conveniencies or comforts of life, without running in debt to procure them;--let Mr. Pitt reflect upon this, and he will ſee the remark verified which he made in the Houſe of Commons, on demanding an augmentation of the Prince of Wales's income: namely, "that the expences of all "deſcriptions of men are ſo very much advanced, that neither "luxury, dignity, or even eaſe and comfort can be procured, "without an additional income of one fourth of the ſum which "was neceſſary fifty years ago"—and then let him aſk himſelf what comment the people (who thus ſuffer the privation of both eaſe and comfort without any ſuch additional income) can put upon his conduct, when he has the inſolence to mock their feelings by taxing their very famine to pay the debts of ſhameful debauchery.

And

And this leads me to ſtate another reaſon why I believe that if an inſurrection commences, it will not be eaſily quelled, which is, that by theſe means the ſtimulus to induſtry is deſtroyed; if I ſhould be aſked what that ſtimulus is, I anſwer the hope of procuring eaſe and comfort; but there is now no probable ground to encourage this hope, for the utmoſt ſtretch of exertion is found ſcarce ſufficient to procure neceſſaries ſufficient to linger out a life of wretchedneſs. How then can men be expected to exert themſelves in ſupport of a ſyſtem which affords them ſo little happineſs; they have nothing that is worth defending, they have to hope that a change may amend their condition.

It is as eaſy to quell inſurrections over the ale-bench, or by the fireſide, as it is to conquer French Fleets or Armies; but let the perſons who thus boaſt of their fortitude and intrepidity be brought into the actual ſituation, which perhaps they only contemn, becauſe they think it at ſo great a diſtance, and it is not improbable but that ſome motive or intereſt ſuggeſts it proper that they ſhould look before they leap; ſeaſons of danger bring men to their ſenſes, if they have never been in the habits of reflection before.

Unfortunately the more a man reflects, the more his affection towards the preſent ſyſtem is weakened, if he looks around him he is preſented with ſcenes of unparalleled diſtreſs, if backward, he enjoys nothing but the bare *recollection* of comforts his induſtry formerly procured, if forward, a proſpect of Bankruptcy and Impriſonment; from a change in the ſyſtem, therefore he has nothing to fear, but every thing to hope.

I am ſure that no man can deal honeſtly by himſelf, or by the Britiſh nation, who endeavours to diſbelieve or perſuades others to diſbelieve theſe truths: but I will ſtop the mouth of ſcepticiſm, by being more explanatory on the ſubject, it muſt not be ſuppoſed that the mere privation of neceſſaries, is the only ſource from whence ariſe complaints; there are contingencies which operate very powerfully towards producing diſcontent, for when a man begins to reflect upon his condition, he very naturally contraſts it with that of perſons in the ſame

capacity

capacity in times paſt, and alſo with perſons of his own time, who, though they perform no greater ſervices for the ſtate, enjoy a much greater ſhare of its comforts, and the further he preſſes his enquiry, the more it aggravates his caſe; he knows that in the former age, a man with induſtry equal to his own, could ſet up in buſineſs, whereas for himſelf he finds the great expence of keeping a family, an inſuperable bar which prevents him advancing one ſtep further: However, ſtrongly he may be inclined, however well qualified to contribute towards the melioration and improvement of the nation, he finds it next to impoſſible for any mechanic or manufacturer who lives by his labour, to riſe one degree above a ſlave, it is therefore evident that the preſent unnatural ſyſtem, is calculated to ſtifle thoſe very talents which it is the intereſt of the nation to cheriſh.

Another material thing it cramps ſpeculation, for if a man of this deſcription ſhould by the interference of friends, or any other means procure money enough to ſet him up in buſineſs, and he ſhould not immediately ſucceed in getting a ſufficient connection, the enormous expence of houſe-keeping and taxes, would ſink ſo much of his property before he could poſſibly procure any adequate return, that it is probable he becomes a victim to a bailiff and with that, the principles of morality cut up by the root; The great probability of being thus involved, deters men from embracing opportunities to improve when there is ſuch imminent danger of penury and misfortune.

But theſe difficulties are by no means confined to mechanics and manufacturers, when the huſbandman reflect he is able to recapitulate hardſhips enough to ſicken him of the preſent ſyſtem; alas, how degraded is this claſs of men, that they ſhould be kept toiling like African ſlaves, from the riſing of the ſun to the going down of the ſame, for very little more reward than a ſufficiency of provender, to enable them like beaſts of burden to perform their next days taſk; and yet it is a notorious fact that thought the cultivators of the ſoil are the moſt uſeful people in the ſtate, it is a matter of univerſal ſurpriſe throughout the country, how it is poſſible for them

to provide for their families out of the paltry pittance which their ariſtocratic maſters pleaſe to allow them.

To recount all the hardſhips which theſe men ſtruggle with, would occupy a volume, they are divided into numerous claſſes, whoſe ſufferings are peculiar to themſelves, each deplores the loſs of ſome privileges which they once held, and the deprivation of ſome rights of which tyranny has robbed them; one complains that ſome lordly neighbour has incloſed the common land, and thereby prevented him from bringing up a few live ſtock for the uſe of his family; another that eſqr.— in conjunction with his lordſhip's ſteward, is ingroſſing all the farms about the country, and has turned him out of that which has been in his family ever ſince the days of his great grandfather. A third, that ſince his lordſhip has obtained his title, he lives in a great deal more ſplendor, and all his ſons are obliged to have ſeparate carriages, and houſholds ſuited to their rank and dignity as young noblemen. All branches of the family ſeem to require more expence to maintain them, and therefore, the rent of tenants is raiſed, and now continues he, how can we farmers be blamed for the high price of our produce? My rent is raiſed almoſt double, conſequently I cannot lower the price of my corn, unleſs his lordſhip will be content to live on the income he did before he got his title; and to bring up the rear, a fourth complains that young noblemen in the neighbourhood, are ſo frequently hunting over his grounds, that he might as well enliſt for an Eaſt India ſoldier to ſeek for that comfort abroad, which he cannot with all his aſſiduity find at home; for they break down his fences, tread down his corn, and lay open his fields, ſo that he is kept in a continued ſtate of vexation, and yet dare not complain. Theſe mortifying circumſtances are very often aggravated by the man being now only an underling upon the ſame eſtate which formerly belonged to his father, and which they had mutually laboured to improve; then what ſtimulus can there be for a man to aim at improving the ſoil, when the over-bearing landlord, and the devouring prieſt may be the only perſons benefited? Here then induſtry is cramped in the very channel

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where the real intereſts of the country demand the utmoſt encouragement.

Let any man who will deny theſe truths, point out the reaſon why this country does not produce a ſufficiency for every individual to have a bellyful; for my own part, till ſomebody better informed than myſelf, ſhall aſſign ſome other reaſon: I muſt retain the opinion, that it is becauſe the government of this country are more diligent in contriving how they ſhall drag twenty millions, annually out of the pockets of the people, than they are in endeavouring to do any thing for it when they have got it; ſo that inſtead of the people being any better for ſpending this enormous ſum for a government, it anſwers no other purpoſe than that of cheriſhing neglect, cauſing the commonwealth to be ill managed, and in depriving themſelves of thoſe advantages they pay for.

Should we have been upon the verge of famine in this fruitful country? or would our markets have been filled with the complaints of the poor, and the cries of the children, if we had lived under the viviſying influence of equal repreſentation.

And this leads me to ſtate another reaſon; why I believe that if an inſurrection ſhould commence, it will not be eaſily quelled, which is becauſe the people are convinced, that their diſtreſſes ariſe from the prodigality and expence of the government: By the ſame channel through which they learn, that upwards of half a million of money is to be ſqueezed out of their pockets to pay the Prince of Wales's debts; they alſo learn that enormous ſums are drained from them to be applied to purpoſes from which they derive no greater benefit: namely, from the miniſter's ſpeeches in parliament, they learn that the Emperor of Germany has a ſubſidy of 4,800,000, for carrying on a war of which himſelf (oſtenſibly at leaſt) was the inſtigator. The king of Pruſſia has had 1200,000l. for maintaining a league which he is the firſt to diſſolve. The King of Sardinia has had 400,000l. for defending his own dominions, though he has abandoned them to the enemy; in fact they find that their pockets are picked under various pretences, to ſubſidize almoſt every petty deſpot on the continent, and all this forſooth

they

they are told is neceſſary to defend the ſplendor and dignity of the monarchy.

By this means alſo, they learn that parliament grants many millions of their money, for the intereſt of ſums applied to thoſe purpoſes, and their own good ſenſe teaches them that if the ſtock jobbers were really influenced by that patriotiſm, that love of their country, which they ſo zealouſly recommend, they would cheerfully contribute towards the neceſſities of the ſtate, without ſuch exorbitant demands for uſury, but when they ſee mens profeſſions and practices ſo oppoſite, it leads them to ſuſpect that they can only be ſo zealous in ſupport of the preſent ſyſtem, becauſe it is calculated to anſwer ther own ſiniſter ends, and it requires but little reflection to juſtify the ſuſpicions by fact, for with a very little obſervation it may be ſeen, that the ſupporters of Mr. Pitt's adminiſtration, conſiſt chiefly of men, rather intereſted in the deſtruction, than the proſperity of their country, being chiefly made up of ſtock-jobbers, contractors, monopolizers, placemen, penſioners, ſpies, informers, and thief-takers.

Unfortunately for the preſent ſyſtem the more it is examined, the more its pernicious conſequences appear, and it would be criminal to endeavour to conceal them. To prove that the worſt of conſequences attend it, it is only neceſſary to remind the reader, that the high price of proviſions have always kept pace with the progreſs of the funding ſyſtem; nor can any means uſed to remedy the evil be effectual, while the people ſuffer the miniſter to impoſe freſh taxes for the purpoſe of paying intereſt.

It is a fact that cannot be denied, that proviſions taken generally, are dearer now than they ever were known in this country. Let us reflect alſo, that Mr. Pitt has diſtributed for intereſt, a larger portion of money than ever miniſter dared to do before him; and then let every one aſk himſelf what advantages are likely to accrue from the preſent attempts to lower the price of proviſions, till there is an alteration in the ſyſtem.

At beſt it can only be a temporary remedy for a permanent diſeaſe, and here perhaps I might be expected to cloſe my remarks

remarks on this ſubject; but the greater evil yet remains to be told, which is that thoſe very men are ſo fully convinced of the advantages they derive from the preſent ſyſtem, and are ſo determined to purſue it with the moſt unrelenting perſeverance: that the profits of their monopoly is baſely applied in procuring themſelves ſeats in that parliament where they have an opportunity of diſpoſing of the property of the people in ſuch a way, as that it may gratify their own avarice; therefore when the nation ſees the very vitals of the country, the manufactures, commerce, and above every thing, the production of the earth monopolized to ſupport this ſyſtem; can the people be any longer left to doubt, that the cauſe of all this miſery lies in the government. And this brings me to the fourth and laſt reaſon which I ſhall ſtate: why I believe that if an inſurrection ſhould take place, it will not be eaſily quelled: it is becauſe the barriers of defence are broken down, that is to ſay, becauſe the hearts of the ſailors and ſoldiers by whom alone the preſent ſyſtem can be ſupported, are not inclined to defend it; I know there is a certain deſcription of men who would riſk every thing that is dear to this country, rather than this truth ſhould be expoſed, but ſurely it is not for our intereſt to be lulled to ſleep in the midſt of danger, and that by the mere ſound of ſecurity echoed forth by thoſe who have deceived us in almoſt every inſtance. I hope it is an axiom well known in this *religious nation*, that men may be ſo circumſtanced, "that when they ſhall ſay peace and ſafety, then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them, and they ſhall not eſcape." I *Theſ.* v 3.

Citizens, let us not be deceived, this is an age of deception, let us not imagine that the people are contented, becauſe a few rotten boroughs ſend addreſſes to London, and theſe procured by placemen and penſioners, ſatelites of that adminiſtration which has drawn from the nation near ſeventy millions of money, and one hundred thouſand lives for purpoſes of which ſcarce any part has been accompliſhed.

If they had ſucceeded in ſecuring Holland, conquering Paris, and deſtroying French Principles, they would have had

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ſome claim upon our confidence, but they have not; Paris is triumphant, Holland is abandoned, and a large cargo of *French principles* are imported with the *Britiſh army*; can we then witneſs thoſe defeats without ſeeing that we have been deluded, ſeeing that we are deluded, ought we not to examine the ground upon which we ſtand, or ſhall we ſee the clouds gather and not endeavour to avert the ſtorm; certainly not! by ſuch indolence, we ſhould ſurrender the birthright of Britons, and render ourſelves worthy thoſe chains it is intended we ſhould wear: we therefore cannot perform our duty without ſurveying the diſpoſitions of the army and navy. And here if we were at a loſs for information reſpecting the ſtanding army; we cannot remain ignorant of the diſpoſition of the militia: the ſpirit which they have ſo frequently manifeſted at the market places, and the firmneſs with which they have reſolved not to fire upon the people, ſufficiently demonſtrate *their* averſion to the preſent ſyſtem, but we are not ignorant even of the diſpoſition of the regulars; it is univerſally known that they have returned to England, the apoſtles of military liberty; they have learnt that men may be good ſoldiers without degrading themſelves to puppets, that tyrannical caprice is not a ſufficient pretence for making war upon their neighbours; that peace and friendſhip *can* ſubſiſt between a Frenchman and an Engliſhman, when deſpotic power is not intereſted in ſowing diſcord, they know that the happineſs of a French ſoldier ariſes from the ſyſtem under which he lives, and not from the conſideration of having a temporary addition of pay, juſt when his humane governors think they cannot do without him.

If governments wiſh ſoldiers to be intereſted in their ſupport, they ſhould abandon the idea of enliſting them for an unlimited time, which makes the life of a ſoldier a ſtate of poverty, ignomony, and contempt, if they were to be enliſted but for two years, their ſtate would be no more deſirable than that of a bird in a cage. for the ſmallneſs of their pay renders it impoſſible, that either they or their families ſhould be above the reach of want and dependence; but when a man is doomed to this ſtate of wretchedneſs for a whole lifetime, his

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*ſpirit* becomes broken, he feels no incitement to exertion, he is deprived of the rights of a citizen, and he is reviled by ariſtocratic inſolence, as ſomething inferior to man; he therefore has no hope but from a change of the ſyſtem, How then can we believe that the ſoldiers would aſſiſt in quelling an inſurrection, that would promiſe to be ſuceeſsful, ſeing that it might meliorate, but could not degrade their ſituation.

If it ſhould be anſwered, that they never have acted out of love to ſyſtem, but out of fear, and that the ſame fear would enforce obedience to any command. I reply that this would have been a very fair way of reaſoning, if the French revolution had never happened, but that event has ſhewn ſoldiers, that they can riſe ſuperior to the command of the higheſt officers, by uniting firmly to ſupport each other, as was the caſe when the baſtille was deſtroyed; or I will allow more, this might have been an argument, if our ſoldiers had never been on the continent, for then they would have remained ignorant of the effects that the revolution had produced upon the army of France. They would not have known that liberty makes every cilizen a ſoldier, and every ſoldier a citizen; but now the caſe is different, a cloſe intimacy with the French army, (for there has been a cloſe intimacy, and they have enjoyed the pleaſures of fraternity) has taught them as liberty is equally dear to every member of the commonwealth, ſo every member ought to riſe and defend it; alſo that every man in an army running an equal riſk, ſo every one ought to have an opportunity of enjoying it when it is ſecured.

It would now be difficult to convince a ſoldier, that there is either propriety or juſtice, in raiſing boys to ſuperior ſtations in the army, who have never undergone any military hardſhips, and perhaps never ſeen the field of battle, and it would be alſo as difficult to perſuade them that there is any degree of juſtice in preventing thoſe who have endured the hardſhips of war, from equally enjoying all the benefits of civil ſociety, and the equal guarantee of thoſe laws, which they have been fighting to maintain; but perhaps I have multiplied arguments without neceſſity, as we might appeal to facts, and *they* would prove that this fear has loſt its effects; the in-

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ſtance of the militia refuſing to fire upon the people, which has ſo recently occurred and ſo univerſally known, is an anſwer ſo full that it ſuperceeds any thing I might be inclined to ſay upon the ſubject.

But thoſe principles are not confined to the ſoldiers. the ſailors are alſo tinctured with them in a great degree; if you aſk a ſailor why the French fight better now than in former times, he will tell you becauſe they are fighting for liberty; and this brings on a recapitulation of his own grievances; he tells of his being dragged from a ſhip in which he expected to make a proſperous voyage. of the ill treatment he received from the ruffians in the impreſs ſervice, and of the famil that he has left behind, and now continues he, what am I fighting for? the privilege of being ratan'd every time any Jackey upon the quarter deck thinks proper to make ſport of me.

Such obſervations are common among the ſailors at Portſmouth; they complain alſo, that they are very little better than priſoners, prevented from employing their time in the way that would prove moſt advantageous to themſelves, and obliged to riſk their lives and limbs in a conteſt which would never make one ſixpence difference to them whether it be ſettled one way or the other; indeed they appear much ſurprized that the nation ſuffers the war to be carried on, which to uſe their own phraſe, is nothing more than one man fighting with another, becauſe he wears what cloaths he pleaſes; now when we add to this, the indignation with which the ſailors ſpeak of their being kept out of their prize money; we ſhall not be ſurprized that the prevailing ſentiment among them, is "*I fight that I may ſtill remain ſlave.*" And can we then expect ſuch men to be much intereſted in ſupporting the preſent ſyſtem.

But methinks I hear ſome lion-like hero exclaim, why all this fear, where lies the danger? Do not ſuch myriads of volunteers entering into the army or navy ſufficiently prove their inviolable attachment to the preſent ſyſtem?

I anſwer if they were really volunteers it would; but a great many of thoſe men at entering into the ſervice were unacquainted with the grounds of the conteſt, and many were averſe

it, conſequently could not be volunteers, for as it is being under the influence of his own will, that conſtitutes man a volunteer in any ſervice, ſo when a man from dire neceſſity accepts of any thing he does not approve from principle, he cannot be termed a volunteer; for of two evils, he chuſes the leaſt, and of this deſcription are moſt of the ſoldiers and ſailors, and I believe if a decree was paſſed, that all ſhould be allowed to leave the army, who were not really volunteers, our ranks would ſoon be very much thinned; therefore in order that all may not place an ill founded confidence in the forces (than which nothing can be more fatal to the true intereſts of a nation) it may not be amiſs to enquire how men are induced to enter the ſervice of the army or navy, and it will be found they generally enter from diſtreſs, and this diſtreſs ariſes out of the very ſyſtem they are fighting to ſupport.

It has already been obſerved, that the preſent ſyſtem can be productive of nothing but poverty and wretchedneſs to the labouring part of the community, of which our armies and navies are generally compoſed; for inſtance, at the age of fourteen, a lad is bound apprentice to ſome deſpot of a maſter: juſt as his genius begins to bud, his talents begins to bloom, and the fruits of the man would come forth, by induſtriouſly preparing for his future wants, the fair fruit is forbidden to ripen for being under an unnatural obligation, to work for one man who reſtrains his efforts, and his natural verdure is concealed like a tree that is rootbound. But as a ſeven years ſlavery is difficult to bear, he is conſoled with a perſuaſion, that when he gets out of his time and becomes a man, he will be able to do ſome great thing for himſelf, and conſequently calculates upon his being able to maintain himſelf and his family decently, and as nothing is more natural to inexperienced young men than to marry ſoon after they are out of their time, the unconſcious youth finds himſelf introduced into a ſtate that requires more than he can procure; and all his former expectations end "like the fabric of a viſion."

Now diſſappointed in every attempt, he firſt becomes careleſs, ignorant of the cauſe, nothing being more common than for a man and his wife mutually to upbraid each other with

neglect, aſſigning as a reaſon that their fathers kept a family decent with leſs than they have, though each affirm that they ſtrive with all their might; this of courſe introduces broils into the family, and renders home uncomfortable, a ſituation which is productive of almoſt every evil, for then follows diſſipation, that by ſtupifying their ſenſes they may drown their miſery, and thus they get enthralled in various embaraſſments which drive to deſperation, and the only refuge is the army or navy.

I therefore think it unneceſſary to aſk whether ſuch men can be depended on in caſe of an inſurrection, as I have no doubt it will be anſwered in the negative. I will preſume that by this time my readers are convinced, that if an inſurrection ſhould take place it will not be eaſily quelled.

And now nothing would remain for me, but to point out the means which I think it your duty to uſe, in order to remove thoſe grievances which might occaſion it; but as I ſee a very forcible objection that may be urged againſt the uſe of any means, I think it neceſſary to anſwer it before I proceed.

Say ſome it is not ſufficient to prove that an inſurrection would not be quelled; it muſt be proved that bad conſequences would attend it before we can feel ourſelves intereſted in uſing means to prevent it.

If this muſt be proved, then let me refer you to the Paris Journals, there you read of the 10th of Auguſt, the 2d: and 3d. of September, in lines of blood; let me turn your attention to the wars of Lyons and La Vendee, where you will ſee the children fighting againſt the parent, and the parents petitioning the convention for the murder of their children: and then let me aſk you, whether it is not the duty of every member of civil ſociety, to endeavour by an amicable explanation to reconcile all differences that may ariſe in a ſtate.

But ſuppoſe, in compliance with the wiſhes of miniſtry, the people ſhould continue their party diſſention; ſuppoſe they obſtinately refuſe meeting to explain their political differences, till the ſmothered embers of diſcord burſt forth into a flame; let me endeavour to depict what are the conſequences that will enſue, rancour and malice will be kindled in every breaſt,

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and like a flaming torch, devour all before it. Every man will be taught to to look upon his neighbour as his enemy, each to ſecure himſelf from danger, will be graſping at power; and to attain it, will embrue his hands in the blood of his friend, ſpies will be ſtationed in every man's family who will be ready to pervert his expreſſions, ſo that they may anſwer the purpoſes of party, and in the hurry of the moment his life may be taken away, before he has time to prove his innocence.

Such readerare the conſequences, and for any thing you know to the contrary, you may be the firſt victim, it is not therefore meddling with other men's matters to devote a degree of of your attention to politics; it is performing a duty in which you are perſonally concerned; and this calls upon me to ſhew the way in which we may perform that duty. And after maturely conſidering this ſubject in every point of view, I declare I am convinced there is no way of performing it but by aſſociating to diſcuſs the principles and meaſures of government, and purſuing that courſe which the law points out to obtain a reform of thoſe abuſes, which would never have crept in, but for the people's inattention.

That all our national calamities originate in the preſent conſtitution of the Houſe of Commons, has been ably proved by the Duke of Richmond; the London Correſponding and London Reforming Societies; and I preſume it is a fact ſo univerſally admitted, that it would be impertinent to advance another argument to prove it. But if another argument was was neceſſary the conduct of your repreſentatives would certainly be the moſt cogent that could be advanced.

You aſſembled at your common hall and after conſidering the deplorable ſituation to which your country was reduced through a calamitous war, you petitioned parliament to put an end to it, and it was the duty of your repreſentatives to have acted in uniſon with the principles your petition contained, and withdrawn their ſupport from the preſent contemptible adminiſtration; but a counter petition (ſurreptitiouſly procured) afforded them a pretence for continuing to ſupport a ſet of men whom their conſtituents deſpiſe, and betraying that intereſt it was their duty to ſupport. Citizens, in this conduct three

appear very conſpicuous, which it is in your power to remedy, and which I would recommend you ſhould do as ſpeedily as poſſible; the firſt is, that the repreſentative and his conſtituents do not communicate with each other. The ſecond is that the intereſt of the repreſentative is oppoſed to that of his conſtituents; and the third is, that the repreſentative is independent of his conſtituents.

The firſt of theſe ariſes from the want of conſidering the relationſhip that ſubſiſts between the repreſentative and his conſtituents; the people of England are apt to conſider the parliament as the maſters, rather than the ſervants of the people; as men whoſe commands muſt be obeyed, rather than as men whoſe duty it is to obey the people's command. Indeed thoſe ſentiments ſeem to have taken ſo deep root, that the repreſentatives themſelves appear to direct their conduct by them, for when your general meeting was called (which perhaps was the firſt time you have had occaſion to give any orders to your repreſentatives ſince this parliament has been choſen) ſo far were they from uſing diligence to aſcertain your wiſhes, that not one of them attended to receive your orders. Citizens, are the people to be treated in this contemptuous manner? If they are, we muſt not be ſurprized to hear members of parliament boaſt of the proſperity and happineſs of the country, while their conſtituents are periſhing for want; and while they are rolling in pomp and luxury, without ever ſhewing their faces to their conſtituents to examine into their wants, or hear their complaints; we cannot expect them to make laws either for the improvement of the country, or the alleviation of its diſtreſſes.

The ſecond evil may be aſcribed to two principal cauſes: Firſt, the great number of places and penſions which the miniſtry has to beſtow on thoſe members who will join in laying taxes on the people to pay them. The ſecond is the intereſt, which many members of parliament have in contracts and bargains made with the miniſtry, by which means they grow rich at the people's expence.

The third evil ariſes from the number of electors being ſo ſmall, that individuals in many places can buy up all their

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qualifications, and choſe themſelves to manage *(for the good of the nation)* in parliament; but this is not the reaſon why your members are independent of you, becauſe you are certainly ſufficiently numerous to keep yourſelves independent, if you have but honeſty to reſiſt corruption; their being inpendent of you therefore ariſes; ſecondly from the length of parliament; for as it has been obſerved, a ſeven years parliament is ſix years independent of its conſtituents, or in other words, it has ſix years to ſin, and one to repent. Now though no reform can be competent to the ſituation of the country, but that of univerſal ſuffrage and annual parliaments, as recommended by the Duke of Richmond, and you cannot procure that reform without the joint co-operation of the whole country, yet you have it in your power to remove theſe three evils at the next general election, *if a reform ſhould not take place before.* My opinion is therefore, that you ſhould immediately form yourſelves into election ſocieties to digeſt and arrange a chain of ſolid principles, which may be calculated to direct the conduct of your repreſentatives, and to promote your intereſt, and in uniting to ſecure the election of two men who will conform to ſuch principles, you will not as heretofore be engaged, merely in the intereſt of Mr. Such-an-one, and Mr. Such-an-one, but you will be engaged in ſupporting the principles which ſecure your own intereſt, ſuppoſe for inſtance, you where to agree to the following general principles:

1. That no member of parliament is any thing more than the ſervant of his conſtituents.

2. That therefore the will of his conſtituents ought to be the only rule of his conduct.

3. That in order for him to be particularly acquainted with that will, he ſhould frequently communicate with them.

4. That thoſe communications ſhould be held in public in order that every citizen may have an opportunity to deliver his opinion.

5. That he ſhould not only attend their public aſſemblies to receive their directions when any important diſcuſſion is to come before the ſenate, but alſo in caſe the parliament ſhould

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reſolve contrary to their wiſhes; he ſhall return and ſhew what were the grounds for ſuch a deciſion.

6. That no member of parliament ought to hold either place, penſion, or emolument, either directly or indirectly from the king or his miniſters.

7. That in order to ſuperſede the neceſſity of their becoming dependant on the crown, their expences ought to be paid by their conſtituents.

8. That no man ought to be choſen a repreſentative who does not conform to theſe rules.

9. That if any caſe ſhould occur where a repreſentative thinks he cannot conſcientiouſly comply with the will of his conſtituents, he ought to reſign.

10. If ever a repreſentative ſhould refuſe to do ſo, he ſhall ceaſe to be paid by his conſtituents, and be deemed infamous.

Thoſe reſolutions would ſuperſede the evils before-mentioned, and prevent the will of the conſtituent body from being underminded by a ſmall faction. To carry them into effect, therefore, your attention ſhould next be turned towards finding two men, whoſe wiſdom, firmneſs and honeſty would qualify them to be your repreſentatives, and this would be attended with no difficulty, conſidering the many reſpectable men there are in your own body. I preſume it is almoſt unneceſſary to ſay having found two ſuch men, your next care will be to ſecure their election by prevailing on all the electors to join your ſociety for that purpoſe, and there explaining the equitable principles upon which you are founded; it has been the misfortune of this country that the conſtituent bodies have ſeldom met to conſult who were the propereſt men to repreſent them till juſt as the time for the election has arrived, then ſomebody has been thruſt upon them whom they could not do otherwiſe than chuſe (whether known to be bad or not known at all) becauſe they had neglected to provide proper perſons; this neglect is itſelf an evil, and when it is aided by that ſtate of inebriation which candidates generally introduce at elections, it is fraught with the worſt of conſequences; for this generally affords

affords the moſt arch deceiver an opportunity of prevailing upon ſimple men to entruſt him with the power of diſpoſing of their greateſt concerns in the way that beſt ſuits his own intereſt; and I might add, that as far as a few ſlices of ham or bottles of wine produce this effect, it places the people of England in the ſame ridiculous point of view with the man who ſold his birth-right for a meſs of pottage.

By aſſociating thus you will at leaſt gain an aſcendency over theſe temporary abuſes, for when you are determined to ſecure the election of men who are connected with your own intereſt, you have placed yourſelves above the reach of corruption, and when you engage them to vacate their ſeats in caſe of loſing your confidence, you ſecure them from being corrupted.

But notwithſtanding thoſe advantages would be gained, it will be evident that they do not effect a Parliamentary Reform, that being a meaſure for a ſeperate conſideration; yet as it is the only meaſure that can ſave the country from inſurrection, anarchy or ruin, the firſt order you ſhould give your repreſentative ought to be to give it all their ſupport; and now, citizens, having no doubt but your conſciences will bear me witneſs that you cannot neglect aſſociating to procure a Reform without being acceſſary to the ruin of your country; I ſhall conclude the ſubject by cautioning you againſt any inſinuations that may be held out to deter you from performing that duty.

The ſatellites who rally round twenty millions of taxes, uſe every means to protect their infernal charge, they know that if the people were to aſſociate, their wiſdom, would ſoon dictate the means of reducing this enormous ſum. To prevent therefore the people from aſſociating, they have uſed every meaſure which the imaginations of dæmons could invent. Attempts have been made to injure thoſe who have aſſociated in their trade and connections; and leaſt this ſhould not prove ſufficient, alarms have been ſpread that the miniſtry held ſuch indignation againſt them that they are in danger of being impriſoned and puniſhed. Citizens will you by ſuch artifices be threatened out of your moſt valuable rights?

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They might ſerve as bugbears to frighten children, but will men ſubmit to ſurrender the privilege of thinking and communicating their thoughts for fear of a phantom, and ſuch is a miniſter's wrath. They may gratify their little ſpleen, by depriving public-houſes of their licences, as they have done, but if you have any courage, if you have any virtue, if you have any morality, you will open your own houſe for the reception of political ſocieties, and let who dare interrupt you, and having done this, if your endeavours ſhould fails of ſucceſs, you will at leaſt have the conſolation that I have in addreſſing this letter to you, that of having done your duty.

Wiſhing you ſucceſs,

I am yours in the cauſe of Reform,

An ELECTOR.

FINIS.

Eratum.—Page 4. line 30, for friends, read *fiends*